

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

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Please substitute the following replacement paragraph for the paragraph beginning at paragraph [0068]:

In step S380, the branch is assigned to the parity node. Next, in step S390, t is indexed for the selected information or parity bit. Then, in step S400, a determination is made whether t branches are assigned to all information and parity bits. If t branches are not assigned to all information and parity bits, control continues to step S400 S410. Otherwise, control jumps to step S420 where the control sequence ends.